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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/023,354	12/17/2001	Chris D. Tanton	65890-0002	2753

10291 7590 08/16/2005

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EXAMINER

HARTMAN JR, RONALD D

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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2121

DATE MAILED: 08/16/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

## Office Action Summary

**Application No.**

10/023,354

**Applicant(s)**

TANTON, CHRIS D.

**Examiner**

Ronald D. Hartman Jr.

**Art Unit**

2121

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 02 June 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 2,3,5,7,9-21 and 23-32 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 2-3, 5, 7, 9-21 and 23-31 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 32 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## DETAILED ACTION

### *Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102*

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

Claim 32 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Duemler, U.S. Patent No. 6,535,786.

As per claim 32, Duemler teaches a modular automation apparatus comprising:

- a base unit and an automation module (e.g. "base unit" and "workstation module"; Figure 1, elements 30 and 100, respectively);
- said base unit providing a predetermined control function and the base unit adapted to receive an automation module (e.g. C3 L37-49);
- said automation providing a predetermined automation function (e.g. C3 L24-35), said automation module configured to mate with the base unit (e.g. C3 L37-49);
- wherein when the base unit and the automation module are cooperatively assembled, the combination is capable of performing a predetermined automation function (e.g. manufacturing, Abstract); and
- wherein the base unit further includes at least one safety device configured to prevent operation of the automation apparatus during a function performed by the automation module that could result in injury to the user of the apparatus (e.g. On/Off or emergency stop switches provided by a control panel, Figure 4 element 780, C7 L62-67).

***Allowable Subject Matter***

2. Claim 27 is allowed over the prior art of record.

As per claim 27, the prior art of record fails to teach a modular automation apparatus comprising a base unit comprising a frame having a control cabinet which houses a programmable logic controller to perform a predetermined control function, in combination with an automation module, which has a frame and which performs a predetermined automation function, such that when the base unit and the module are mated together, the combination allows for a predetermined automation function to be performed after information stored in the module is downloaded into the base unit, in combination with the other claimed features and or limitations.

As per claims 28-30, specifically independent claim 28, the prior art of record fails to teach a method assembling the automation apparatus discussed above. The prior art of record fails to teach downloading stored data from the module into the base unit upon connection with one another. Several modular automation systems were found, and are discussed below, during a search of the prior art of record, but none disclosed the downloading, or transferring, or stored data from the module, or expansion module, into the base unit upon connection with one another, for collectively performing an automation function, in combination with the other claimed features and or limitations.

As per claims 2-3, 5, 7, 9-21, 23-26 and 31, specifically independent claim 31, the prior art of record fails to teach the same features or limitations, which are absent from the prior art, as already discussed above in reference to claim 28, in combination with the other claimed features and or limitations as claimed.

***Conclusion***

3. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

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A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ronald D. Hartman Jr. whose telephone number is (571) 272-3684. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Fri., 11:00 - 8:30 pm, EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anthony Knight can be reached on (571) 272-3687. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

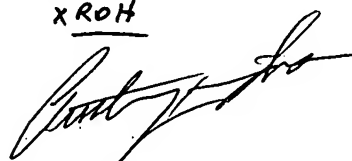
Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Ronald D Hartman Jr.

Patent Examiner

Art Unit 2121

X ROH



**Anthony Knight**

**Supervisory Patent Examiner  
Group 3600**

August 11, 2005